

News Notes

from the COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN THE U.S.A.
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addressed to those who are concerned with Christianity and Higher Education

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ANNUAL MEETING - COUNCIL OF PROTESTANT COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Statler-Hilton Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts
January 12, 1960

Luncheon - 12 noon - Bay State Room
(please send in reservations)

Address: ARTHUR G. COONS
President, Occidental College

Discussion Panel on Christian convictions and liberal values in
a world of educational bigness and administrative complexity.

THE ORGANIZATION MAN AND THE AMERICAN COLLEGE

- From an Institutional and Educational Perspective
Dr. Marshall Dimmock, Professor of Government
New York University, N. Y.
- From a Theological and Sociological Perspective
Dr. Will Herberg, Professor, Drew University
Madison, New Jersey

Business Meeting - Ball Room Assembly

ATHENS QUADRENNIAL ON LIFE AND MISSION

A major event in prospect is the 18th Ecumenical Student Conference on the Christian World Mission to be held at Athens, Ohio, December 27, 1959 to January 2, 1960, when some 3000 students, about half of them from overseas, will gather to study and think together about God's mission for the Church in the world. This conference is held in the context of the World's Student Christian Federation six-year emphasis on the Life and Mission of the Church among student Christian movements around the world.

The Quadrennial itself will focus attention on specific "frontiers" whose urgency claims the special attention of the Church. Bishop Lesslie Newbigin of the Church of South India is to give a series of biblical expositions which will be followed by analyses of the "frontiers" by Martin Luther King, racial tensions - Bola Ige of Nigeria, new nationalisms - Harry Daniels of Pakistan, resurgent religions - Richard Shaull, new patterns of obedience. In the afternoons the delegates will divide into nine groups to discuss other "frontiers" - technological upheaval; modern secularism; responsibility for statesmanship; higher education; displaced, rejected, uprooted peoples; communism.

The conference will open with a service of worship followed by a presentation of the religious drama, Sign of Jonah.

Year-long study will precede and follow the conference as (inter-confessional, inter-racial, international) groups engage in discussion through such books as: Outside the Camp, Charles West; Politics and Evangelism, Philippe Maury; God's People and God's World, a Bible study guide.

If the readers of this sheet are like the writer, they sometimes make generalizations based upon facts and figures and then forget the precise facts and figures. For those who are pointing out that the ratio of students in public and private colleges and universities is changing rapidly, I give the figures of Chancellor Clifford Furnas of the University of Buffalo.

FACTS
AND
FIGURES

In 1959, 56% of our students are in publicly supported institutions and 44% in private.

He estimates that in 1969, 66 2/3% will be in public and 33 1/3% in private and in 1979, 80% in public and 20% in private.

CHANGING
RATIO

For those who have bemoaned the failure of Americans to read, the New York Times Book Review, October 25th, quotes the Saturday Review for June 2, 1959 in reporting:

25% of college graduates have not read a book in the past year; only 17% of American adults at any time are reading a book; 42% of American homes have no book cases; only 13% of Americans borrow books from public libraries; 50% of these are good reading, 7% fair, 88% low

"DO
JOHNNY'S
PARENTS
READ?"

Here are the figures on the number of Educational institutions in the US as given by the Council for Financial Aid to Education.

510 Two-year colleges
1,350 four-year, degree-granting colleges and universities
-353 of these are publicly supported
-987 are privately supported -- these divided as follows:
392 church-related, non-catholic
223 church-related, catholic
372 independant
Grand total - 1,860

HOW
MANY
COLLEGES
AND
UNIVERSITIES

Other interesting publications:

BOOKS

Crucial Issues in Education, Henry Holt and Co., N.Y. 1959, \$2.75 paper
Autonomy of Public Colleges - The Challenge of Coordination
(A study of state policies on the governing of educational institutions.)
Lyman A. Glenny, McGraw-Hill, 1959, \$5.95

Other books in process by McGraw-Hill:

The Education of American Business Men, Frank C. Pierson
Constraint in College Organization, Burton Clark
The Junior College, Leland Medsker

IMPRESSIONS OF THE FAITH AND LEARNING QUESTION IN EUROPE

Attendance at the University Teacher's Conference on "The Meaning of the Secular" held at Bossey, Switzerland and a few days spent in London give one some impressions of developments. One hesitates to record these since the experience was too brief and limited and the space here for recording them so scanty. Qualified by these limitations here are some reactions and impressions:

- The general openness and almost friendliness that exists toward the Christian faith on American campuses is not apparent in Europe and Britain. There the attitude is one of indifference if not hostility. There is concern for the basic questions but a feeling that Christianity has nothing significant to say since the church is a tradition-bound anachronism in the modern world. Hostility arises from the impression that the church cannot enter honest dialogue on the questions but can only pronounce answers that have been heard before and rejected. There is a feeling that the Church hasn't yet recognized how much its authority has been shaken and how irrelevant it is. Some spokesmen for Christianity are respected as they indicate by humility and openness a willingness to listen in genuine dialogue ("I could sit down and talk with you" said an Oxford philosopher to Ronald Gregor Smith) or who witness by their sacrificial identification with those who are in physical or spiritual need. These are felt to be exceptions who arise in spite of the church rather than being representative of it.
- There are a few professors here and there who openly admit to being Christian but they do it at the cost of being suspect and sometimes alienated in the academic community. It is tragic to have to report the death of one of the foremost of these - Michael Foster of Oxford.
- Among those who seek to engage in conversation with the non-Christian campus world, a theological perspective is emerging that emphasizes a secular Christianity rooted in prophetic religion and denying that the faith imposes metaphysical structures or supernatural revelation. God is revealed or rather encountered in the secular, in the particularities and realities of every day life. The penetrating and sensitive meditations of Dietrich Bonhoeffer give much of the direction and an excellent explication of the approach is found in Ronald Gregor Smith's "The New Man - Christianity and Man's Coming of Age." (British SCM Press, 1956.)
- We have long known of the decline of English church membership but it is startling to visit homes and discover how deep the apathetic and critical feeling toward the church really is. "Of course we are still Christians, but the church is outmoded and dead." This from relatives who used to be active church members.
- Perhaps the American church colleges which were originally patterned after Oxford and Cambridge should take a fresh look at the education that is now to be found there. After the war the Y.M.C.A. seeking new areas of educational need started a program of taking young technically-trained executives from British business and industry and exposing them for six-week periods at Cheshunt College, Cambridge. Here, ten at a time, they are responsible to a tutor provided by the Y, take two courses from a wide variety of choices and enter fully into the life of the college and university. The results have surpassed expectations and been most encouraging. An example and a report are indicative. One young man, fully-qualified technically, was a failure as a personnel executive both in personal relations and working with people despite special training in psychology and human relations. His two courses at Cambridge were "The Life of Samuel Johnson" and "American Foreign Policy in the 19th Century." He came back to his firm a changed man, broadened in outlook, deeper in sympathies and almost completely transformed in his personal relations.

During the past ten years 75% of those entering this program have been indifferent to religion. 50% of these have returned with a live and active interest. Cheshunt is a theological college but no overt attempt was made at evangelization.

- The British Student Christian Movement is facing a development somewhat similar to that experienced some years ago by the Student YM and YWCA's of this country - the emergence of denominational student programs. So far these are local developments and no national programs have emerged. In most situations there is excellent cooperation and coordination. In some, however, there is separatism and competition. Where this will go is not yet known but it is being watched with deep concern.

The DEPARTMENT OF CAMPUS CHRISTIAN LIFE recently brought together for the third time in six years those engaged in cooperative and united campus ministries across the country. Meeting with them were the denominational executives for Campus Christian Life and "related friends" concerned for this ministry. The group (some fifty) faced questions involved in such ecumenical work and discussed:

ECUMENICAL
CAMPUS
MINISTRY

- Denominational policies and objectives in campus ministry..
- Developing working policies and understandings for united campus work

Participants appreciated the fellowship of those who shared this common task and concern and the opportunity of discussing what it means to present a united ministry to the campus while taking seriously the realities of denominational traditions and difference. The denominational executives will share the responsibility for these united projects and will assist them as they would their own. Each project has a denominational staff member as a Designated Representative and a number of suggestions were made as to the kinds of help needed.

A succession of letters asking us for "information on National Council Scholarships," "how to apply for National Council Scholarship funds," "to be considered for a National Council Scholarship," "information on your scholarships for foreign study," etc. lead us to feel that somehow people are being given the idea that the Commission on Higher Education or the National Council of Churches have scholarship funds which they grant to undergraduates, graduates, theological students or prospective teachers. Unfortunately this is not the case. How we wish we had such funds. We certainly hear of enough places where they could be constructively used. So until some person makes such available we hope our friends will stop raising people's hopes. We are sure we are sometimes confused with the National Council on Religion in Higher Education which does grant "Kent Fellowships" for graduate study to certain outstanding students who combine Christian interest with scholarly competence. Such persons are nominated rather than applying. (National Council on Religion in Higher Education, 400 Prospect Street, New Haven, Connecticut.)

NO
NATIONAL
COUNCIL
SCHOLAR-
SHIPS

EARLY WORDS

We now approach the joyous Christmas season which means for some of us a rather feverish scramble to get in promised funds, annual appropriations, and individual gifts so that budgets may be balanced and reports made. We realize that this is not by any means our own peculiar privilege. It is shared by many. Perhaps for just that reason it will be understood when we ask that churches and colleges which support the Commission and its units and individuals who believe in this work will try to send their checks in early.

Hubert C. Noble, General Director